

Appl. No. 10/709,885
Amdt. Dated 02/11/2008
Reply to Office Action of November 16, 2007

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This is in response to an Office action dated 11/16/2007 having a shortened statutory period of response set to expire on February 16, 2008.

Status

Claims 1-17 are pending

Claims 1-20 are rejected

Claim Objections

Claims 1-20 are objected to because of the following informalities: Please remove the parenthesis in numbering the claims. Appropriate correction is required. The parenthesis in numbering the claims is removed.

Claim Rejection(s) under 35 USC 103

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Background of invention (ABI) and Berque US patent Number 7,003,728 B2.

The Office Action notes that as per claim 1, ABI teaches a networked conferencing system (ABI par 0001) comprising: a conference server; conference resources controlled by the conference server; one or more conference clients by which conference participants communicate with the conference server via a communications network; a set of moderator permissions by which the conference server controls moderator access to moderator functions; and means to identify one or more alternate moderator participants, each logged in at a conference client (see par 0001 - 0014). ABI does not explicitly teach at least one set of alternate moderator permissions by which the conference server controls alternate moderator access to moderator functions; and means to identify a moderator participant logged in at a conference client. Berque teaches those features (see Berque col. 14 line 33 to col. 15 line 4). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill

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in the art at the time of the invention incorporate Berque's features into ABI because it would facilitate an alternate moderator to accomplish a task that would have been delayed due to unforeseen events and inconveniences encountered by the primary moderator (see Berque col. 14 line 55 to col. 15 line 4).

The Office Action also states as per claim 2, Berque teaches a system according to claim 1, wherein the moderator participant designates one or more alternate moderator participants at a time of conference creation (see Berque col. 14 line 33 to col. 15 line 4).

The Office Action states that Claims 3-7 discuss alternate moderator (see Berque col. 14 line 33 to col. 15 line 4).

The Office Action continues with as per claim 8, Berque teaches a system according to claim 1, further comprising means for the moderator participant to transfer moderator status to another participant (see Berque col. 14 line 33 to col. 15 line 4).

The Office Action continues that Claims 9-20 disclose the same limitations as discussed in claims 1-8 above. Therefore, they are rejected under the same rationale.

The Invention, Generally

The invention is generally directed to a networked conferencing system wherein the moderation privileges for the conference can be granted to more than one individual prior to the initiation of the conference. Such individuals are designated by the main or primary conference moderator and are known as alternate moderators. By granting selected moderator privileges to one or more alternate moderators, any alternate moderator can take over control of a conference in the absence of the "main" or "primary" moderator, even prior to the meeting beginning, permitting conferencing to proceed smoothly and without delay.

The References

Berque US 7,003,728 (col 14/line 33 to col 15/line 4) is related to the present invention.

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However, it sets forth on col 14, lines 35-36, that "the user's workstation can become the moderator." This is typical of the prior art systems and is lacking that the present invention addresses. That is, while the participant work stations can "become" moderators during the meeting, they weren't moderators prior to the meeting and didn't have the authority to start the meeting. Moreover, the Berque patent does not provide for "multiple moderators." If the original moderator does not start the conference or the participant who later takes the role of the moderator, drops the call, the conference comes to a halt.

Comments Traversing the Rejection(s)

The present invention provides for "multiple moderators at the same time". They can exist prior to the meeting beginning and identified when the conference "reservation" is established. The conference can be started by one of multiple moderators and the conference can continue should a moderator be dropped for some reason.

As set forth in claim 1 as now amended, there are:

means to identify a moderator participant logged in as a conference client;

means to identify one or more alternate moderator participants, each logged in as a conference client; and

means for the moderator participant to designate one or more alternate moderator participants prior to the convening of the conference whereby the alternate moderator participants can at least one set of alternate moderator permissions prior to the convening of the conference.

None of the prior art taken alone or in combination teaches or suggests designating one or more alternate moderator participants prior to the convening of the conference whereby the alternate moderator participants can at least have access to one set of alternate moderator permissions prior to the convening of the conference. This feature enables the conference to be started by one of multiple moderators and for the conference can continue should a moderator be dropped for some reason. Accordingly, claim 1 should be deemed allowable.

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Claims 2-8 depend upon claim 1 and should be allowable for the same reasons.

Claim 9 as currently amended sets forth a method for providing networked conferencing.

It includes the steps of:

- identifying a moderator participant logged in at a conference client;
- identify one or more alternate moderator participants, each logged in at a conference client; and
- designating one or more of the alternate moderator participants prior to the convening of the conference whereby the alternate moderator participants can at least have access to one set of alternate moderator permissions prior to the convening of the conference.

None of the prior art taken alone or in combination teaches or suggests designating one or more alternate moderator participants prior to the convening of the conference whereby the alternate moderator participants can at least have access to one set of alternate moderator permissions prior to the convening of the conference. This feature enables the conference to be started by one of multiple moderators and for the conference can continue should a moderator be dropped for some reason. Accordingly, claim 9 should be deemed allowable.

Claims 10-16 depend upon claim 9 and should be allowable for the same reasons.

Claim 17 as currently amended sets forth a system for networked conferencing. The system comprises:

- means to identify a moderator participant logged in at a conference client;
- means to identify one or more alternate moderator participants logged in at one or more respective conference clients; and
- means for the moderator participant to designate one or more alternate moderator participants prior to the convening of the conference whereby the alternate moderator participants can at least have access to one set of alternate moderator permissions prior to the convening of the conference.

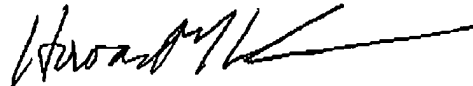
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None of the prior art taken alone or in combination teaches or suggests a system with means for the moderator participant to designate one or more alternate moderator participants prior to the convening of the conference whereby the alternate moderator participants can at least have access to one set of alternate moderator permissions prior to the convening of the conference. This feature enables the conference to be started by one of multiple moderators and for the conference can continue should a moderator be dropped for some reason. Accordingly, claim 17 should be deemed allowable.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,


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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION BY FACSIMILE

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (Fax No. 571-273-8300) on February 11, 2008.

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